

THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.

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VOL. I.

THE TRUST.

SITTING, some time ago, a dying christian, and speaking as fitably as I could to his trying situation; "I hope," said I, "you have committed your everlasting all into the hands of Christ our Redeemer?" His reply not only filled me with inexpressible pleasure, but left that vividness of impression on my mind which living experience and fact possess the power of producing beyond all didactic teaching. "Oh, Sir," said he, with much feeling, "I *have* done so." Happy man! He had not left the work to be commenced amid the pains or stupor of sickness, or the alarms and trepidations of a dying hour. He had long since given himself to the Lord his Saviour for living and for dying. It had been the habit of his life; and now, when he came to die, he could look into eternity without dismay, and depart in peace.

I do not mean that at the approach of death we are not to be deeply exercised in committing our souls to Christ. Christians do so, and do so, then, with a liveliness and joy generally greater than ever previously experienced. But what I mean to enforce is, the necessity of habitually renewing and maintaining, from day to day, through life, the exercise of committing our immortal interests to the guardianship of our divine and compassionate friend, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.

The spiritual life which the christian lives in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God. Natural life, though subject to sleep, to sickness, to fainting, to apparently suspended animation, is yet continuous, and admits not of alternate extinctions and rekindlings. In like manner, spiritual life has its sleep, its sickness, its swoons, but still it is "eternal life," and is, therefore, inextinguishable. It is the concern of the christian, however, to maintain it in health and vigour; and it is susceptible of a growth and expansion which know no limitation. By faith it is begun, and by faith it is carried forward. Faith is not one act of believing, it is a constancy of believing. Where faith is, there is a life of faith. Faith looks to Christ

but it is not enough for the believer, at the period of conversion, to look to him that he may be saved; he must still and always look; and hence faith is a "looking unto Jesus." Faith comes to Christ: but it is not enough for the soul once to come to him for rest; it must still come: coming is descriptive of its daily exercise: hence we have the language, "To whom *coming* as unto a living stone, ye also, as *lively* stones, are built up a spiritual house." Natural life is supported by air, food, drink; and is maintained by the actions of breathing, eating, drinking. Spiritual life, in like manner, has its supplies, and must be maintained by spiritual exercises. We must inhale the breath of the spirit. Our souls must breathe constantly by prayer. We must feed on the truths and promises of the word of God; we must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, if we would have eternal life abiding in us; that is to say, our souls must live by a believing appropriation of the merits of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and an experimental participation of the blessings of his purchase.

Unless we commit our souls to Christ now, what reasonable hope can we entertain that we shall do so with acceptance, or even do so at all, at the closing hour? If we yield not ourselves to him, before we have breathed the breath of expiration, we must be excluded from his presence through eternity. Should we even have some sharp soul exercises at last, are we sure that he will accept an application, into which we may be terrified only by the shock of death? Such an application, however earnest and impassioned, may spring from mere fear and terror, without implying any real hatred of sin, any love to the Saviour, any affectionate desire to be with him.

Suppose, however, hope of acceptance at the last, and we are sure while resolutely living in sin, that to seek when dying the salvation of Jesus, is a thing which we shall actually do. It must be done, if successful, through the Spirit; but are we sure that the Spirit will then enter into a heart that has quenched through life all his awakenings? There must be a heart to do it; but how are we sure that we will have the inclination then more than now? There must be time; but are we sure that we may not die in a state of insensibility, or delirium, or be cut off instantaneously by sudden death?

In every point of view the habitual committing of the soul in well-doing to Christ Jesus, is the part of wisdom. It is not only the way of safety, but it carries with it a *sense* of safety. The heart held up continually to the gracious influence of Him who is the light and life of souls, cannot remain dark

and desolate; but will be covered over with comfort and joy, like the green braird of the spring. The peace of God will cheer the heart and mind; and the sunlight of a lively hope will gild and gladden it amid the cares and crosses of an evil world.

Habitually to have the soul fixed and stayed upon the Lord, to be kept in perfect peace; and to have an unfailing stock of strength and consolation treasured up for the last hour. Life, by such a course, will be divested of its vanity, and death of its terror. A double relish will be given to present enjoyments, and death will be viewed as opening a passage to heaven's boundless blessedness. Pillowing his head on the Redeemer's love, the dying believer fears not to go down to the grave, for he knows that his Redeemer liveth, that he will cheer the trust which he has committed to him, receive his departing spirit, and raise him up at the last day.

Should we spend our days in the service of sin, with what terrific force may convictions and fears be expected to throng and surge around the soul at last, unless our minds be given up to a moral insensibility still more fatal. What madness is it not to break away at once and for ever from those sins and cares which hold us with enchantment spell from Christ and from salvation! What dreadful infatuation, to live in a state of heartless indecision about religion, when die we must, and be judged we must. What a source of discomfort and wretchedness must it be to admit into our minds so much religion as to make us miserable; and not to submit ourselves to it with such entireness as to make us happy; to live in a state of intolerable oscillation, flying for relief from a sense of guilt and vileness to religion; but thrown back again by subdued corruption from religion to sinful indulgence, seeking rest but finding none. Happy are they who give themselves unreservedly to Christ; they only can be truly said to live, and to them only it will be good to die. Amid the sorrows of life, they are not left comfortless; and when flesh and heart fail, God will be the strength of their hearts and their portion for ever.

I know not how to conclude these reflections in a way better calculated to bring the mind to decision and energy in the great work of its salvation, than by employing the powerful language of the great Robert Hall. "Other acquisitions may be requisite to make men great; but be assured the religion of Jesus is alone sufficient to make them good and happy. Powerful sources of consolation in sorrow, unshaken fortitude amid

the changes and perturbations of the world, contentment in every station, passions pure and calm with habitual serenity, the full enjoyment of life undisturbed by the dread of dissolution or the fear of an hereafter, are its invaluable gifts. To these enjoyments, however, you will necessarily continue strangers, unless you resign yourselves wholly to its power; for the consolations of religion are reserved to reward, to sweeten, and to stimulate obedience. Many, without renouncing the profession of christianity, without formally rejecting its distinguishing doctrines, live in such an habitual violation of its laws, and contradiction to its spirit, that, conscious they have more to fear, than to hope from its truth, they are never able to contemplate it without terror. It haunts their imagination, instead of tranquillizing their hearts, and hangs with depressing weight on all their enjoyments and pursuits. Their religion, instead of comforting them under their troubles, is itself their greatest trouble, from which they seek refuge in the dissipation and vanity of the world, until the throbs and tumults of conscience force them back upon religion. Thus suspended between opposite powers, the sport of contradictory influences, they are disqualified for the happiness of both worlds; and neither enjoy the pleasures of sin, nor the peace of piety."

CEPHAS.

FRUITS OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONS.

THE following short extract from Stewart's "Visit to the South Seas, during the years 1829 and 1830," is a sufficient refutation of the calumnies against christian missions, published by the Russian Sea Captain Kotzebue, and some other enemies to christianity.

Mr. Stewart is describing a worshipping assembly at Hido,—in the Sandwich Islands, lying in the South Seas.

"At an early hour of the morning, even before we had breakfasted on board ship, a single islander here and there, or a group of three or four, wrapped in their large mantles of various hues, might be seen winding their way among the groves, fringing the bay on the east, or descending from the hills and ravine, on the north, towards the chapel; and by degrees their numbers increased, till, in a short time, every path along the beach, and over the uplands presented an almost uninterrupted procession of both sexes, and of every age, all pressing to the house of God. So few canoes were round the

hip yesterday, and the landing place had been so little thronged as our boats passed to and fro, that one might have thought the district thinly inhabited; but now such multitudes were seen gathering from various directions that the exclamation, 'what crowds of people, what crowds of people,' was heard from the quarter deck to the fore-castle.

"Even to myself it was a sight of surprise; surprise not at the magnitude of the population, but that the object for which they were assembling should bring together so great a multitude; and as my thoughts re-echoed the words, 'what crowds of people:' remembrances and affections of deep power came over me, and the silent musings of my heart were, 'what a change, what a happy change!' when at this very place, only four years ago, the known wishes and example of chiefs of high authority, the daily persuasion of teachers, added to motives of curiosity and novelty, could induce scarcely a hundred of the inhabitants to give an irregular, careless, and impatient attendance on the services of the sanctuary; but now,

'Like mountain torrents pouring to the main,
From every glen a living stream came forth;
From every hill in crowds they hastened down,
To worship Him who deigns in humblest fane,
On wildest shore to meet the upright in heart.'

Mr. Stewart, after describing the immense size of the place of worship to which he and his brother officers went to join in worship, with a crowded congregation of converts from heathenism, thus proceeds:—

"I have gazed on many worshipping assemblies, and of every variety of character. I have listened with delighted attention to some of the highest eloquence the pulpits of America and England can boast, and have watched with sympathetic excitement the effect produced by it, till all who heard were wrapt into an enthusiasm of high toned feeling, at the sublimity of the scene presented. I have seen tears of conviction and of penitence flow freely, as if to the breaking of the heart, under the sterner truths of the Word of God; and not unfrequently too have witnessed as the annunciation of peace, 'be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee,' has fallen on the soul, smiles of hope and joy, rapidly take their place; but it was left for a worshipping assembly at Hido, the most obscure corner of these distant islands, to excite the liveliest emotions ever experienced, and leave the deepest impressions of the extent and unsearchable riches of the gospel, which I have

ever known—emotions and impressions derived simply from an ocular demonstration of the power of the Word of God, on untutored man, which is without a parallel in existing events, if not in the records of history. The depth of the impression arose from the irresistible conviction, that the spirit of God was there; it could have been nothing else.”

An entire moral reformation has taken place in the neighbourhood of this station. Instruction is eagerly and universally sought, and only last week, not less than ten thousand people were assembled at an examination of schools. Evil customs, and atrocious vices are abandoned; a strict outward conformity to good morals observed; and numbers, it is hoped and believed, have yielded, and are yielding themselves to all the charities and affections of genuine piety.

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.]

EXCITEMENT IN RELIGION.

ITS WARRANTABLENESS, ON THE GROUND OF REASON
AS WELL AS OF SCRIPTURE.

WE find a remarkable instance of excitement indirectly produced by religion, in the scene connected with our Saviour's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. An opinion prevailed extensively, both among his friends and his enemies, that a remarkable crisis was at hand—full of consolation to the one and of calamity to the other. Jesus was now approaching the capital of “the promised land”—and whilst hope and fear doubtless agitated the mingled mass of human beings by whom he was accompanied, it is observable that joyous feeling ultimately preponderated. Hence the loud hosannahs, and the songs of victory, and the triumphal shouts which hailed his ear as he approached, meek and lowly, the confines of the holy city. This was a season of excitement—a season of turbulent rejoicing; but did not our Lord interfere to check the riotous proceedings of the multitude? Did he not, in compliance with the cool and sober-minded suggestion of the Pharisees, rebuke the disciples that they should hold their peace? No; but scanning with contemptuous glance the ill-dissembled subtleties and malice of his enemies, he permitted free scope and liberty to the generous exultations of those who were exclaiming—“Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!”

I. We conceive that a strong presumptive argument in favour of the idea of excitement in religion, may be drawn from the revealed relations in which we stand to futurity. Admitting the bare fact of the immortality of the soul, a fact stated and supported in some of the systems of ancient philosophy, we easily discover the reasonableness of that state of mind which has been denominated excitement. If only we feel convinced that we are to live hereafter, a thousand questions, and surmises, and anxieties, start up in the mind, in relation to the nature, the enjoyments or sufferings of that state of being, the certainty of which has been brought within the sphere of our knowledge. In pursuing such subjects, *can* we divest ourselves of all emotion—of all feeling? *Can* we proceed with the coolness and carelessness of lawyers, endeavouring to settle a stranger's title to an inheritance? Were it even possible to lay aside all emotion, and to maintain a purely intellectual state of mind in seeking for glory, and honour, and immortality, would it be rational? Would it be consistent with the hopes and the fears which are laid deep in our nature: or would it not, on the contrary, be a stoical burlesque on the sympathies of humanity? We hold it absurd in the extreme, to pretend for the utter absence of excitement, from the field of glorious strife, where the enjoyments of heaven are to be lost or won—where the powers of darkness and hell are to be our conquerors or our captives in eternal chains.

There is another view of the subject which we have always regarded as meriting considerable attention. One object of Christianity is to impart knowledge to the understanding. It is important; still it is only *one* object. The affections of the soul must be awakened and consecrated to the service of God; the emotions must be raised to a higher and holier standard. The ulterior object, is to prepare man for the glories of the paradisaical state; and if we know any thing more accurately than another concerning this state, it is, that it will require and excite high and rapturous feelings in the bosoms of the redeemed. Is it probable, then—is it conceivable that the system of divine truth, which is intended to fit the soul for this specific kind of felicity, should make no provision for the cultivation of that part of our nature, through which peculiarly the happiness of heaven will be enjoyed? Is not the supposition contrary to all scripture—to all experience? Well may the servant of God say, "I will joy in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of my salvation. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and new wine

were multiplied." To the same purpose, an Apostle exclaims—"We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement!" The truth is, that the understanding and heart are affected at the same time, and directly or indirectly by the same agency. Is the grasp of the mind extended and strengthened, and enabled to seize on the golden treasures of the gospel; the possession of these treasures fills the heart with joy and gratitude, and then follows naturally a state of high excitement? Are the emotions of the soul awakened, and powerfully called forth by the exhibition of Christ's sacrifice and death; an impulse is thus given to the understanding to seek higher attainments in christian knowledge, and to push forward to mightier enterprize in the struggle for intellectual wealth? Is not this reciprocating influence beautifully intimated in holy writ, by the phrase "*an understanding heart?*"—teaching us that knowledge and feeling—feeling depressed or elevated as the case may be—go hand in hand in the experience of the true christian. This principle enables us to account for the gladness constantly associated with that period, when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the deep. The strength of this joy, in counteracting the ills of life, may be estimated by the declaration of Habakkuk—"Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Hab. iii. 17, 18.

II. The reasonableness of excitement in religion will appear more obvious from a consideration of the objects to be accomplished by Messiah's mission. Jesus Christ came "to seek and to save that which was *lost*." Or, to go more into detail—The Spirit of the Lord God was upon him, because the Lord anointed him to preach good tidings unto the meek; he sent him to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. If, then, it be true, that we are *lost*, and if we feel ourselves to be lost sinners, is it to be expected that conscience will not be seized with alarm? Would it not be more congenial to our state and prospects to cry mightily to God for salvation?—to exclaim with deep emotion, "What shall we do to be saved?—what to inherit eternal life?" Oh, if man truly felt all that is comprehended in that fearful word, "*LOST*," how he would besiege with supplication the throne of mercy—how his

oul would wrestle in prayer for the blessing, even life and safety for evermore ! Why should strong emotion, under such circumstances, be condemned ? Is the mariner whose danger is imminent, who sees Death on the crested wave, and hears him howling in the storm—is he to be blamed because he has hoisted a signal of distress ? O no ; we sympathize with him in his sufferings. Why not show a portion of the same sympathy to the poor perishing sinner, who is alarmed, and justly, lest his soul should be for ever lost ?

Equally apparent will be the reasonableness of strongly excited feelings, if we consider sinful man under the representation of a captive. Jesus came to proclaim liberty to the captives. Do we willingly concede to the captive the melancholy thought of pining for the land of his fathers—of cherishing the hope, faint and glimmering though it be, of liberty ! Instead of denouncing, do we enter deeply into every free-born aspiration which would raise him above the impure atmosphere of captivity, to stand on the holy hill of freedom ? The noble object achieved, the chains of the conqueror broken, and his sword shivered to pieces, do we approve of the inward *feeling* and of the outward *expression* of exultation ? Yes—we consider ourselves blessed in luxuriating amid the rich flow of passion and sentiment, and highly excited emotion, which we cannot help associating with the returning captive. We weep with the desponding Jew by the streams of the river of Babylon ; and we rejoice with him in the city of his fathers' God, where he exclaims, " Beautiful for situation is Jerusalem, the joy of the whole land ! " Let us only apply the same principle in judging of the captives whom Satan hath bound, and it will lead us to flight a host of prejudices against excitement in religion ; let the same principle be applied, and it will lead us rightly to estimate the joy of those who have been introduced into the liberty of the sons of God.

A similar result will be obtained from contemplating the situation of those who are shut up to the dreariness and privations of the dungeon. Can any move a tongue against the prisoner, because he longs to be set at large ; or shall any check the expression of the joy which swells his bosom, when the prison doors are thrown open ? This is all we ask for the prisoners of hope. Let men proceed on the grounds of Scripture, or even of enlightened reason, and they will not, they cannot, blame the emotions of those whom God frees from the prison of sin, by undoing the bars and bolts which would shut up their souls to eternal perdition. Surely such may be per-

mitted with impunity to joy in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of their salvation.

III. It may be necessary to guard against a misconception of the object proposed in these observations. That intense feeling, and the expression of intense feeling are warrantable and by no means inconsistent with christianity, I have endeavoured to establish, but I have not presumed to fix the exact amount of the one, nor the precise limit of the other. The amazing varieties of mental constitution, render any general rule on the subject utterly impossible. One position, which I conceive ought never to be abandoned, is, that there will be emotion—deep emotion, wherever the power of religion is brought to bear on the soul. Such are the established relations between time and eternity, and so valuable the interests of man which they involve, that any adequate discovery of the wonders of redeeming love will produce warmth of feeling in the most cold-hearted, and excitement in the dullest and most phlegmatic. When the understanding is being enlightened, and the heart purified by the gospel of the Son of God, feeling; or if you will, excitement, will be a necessary concomitant. Let us beware, however, of carrying this principle beyond its legitimate boundaries. In religion all will *feel*, but not with the same degree of intensity: just as in religion, all will understand, but the understandings of all will not exhibit the same richness, the same grasp, or the same refined cultivation. We are not authorized, therefore, to expect a perfect similarity of feeling on the part of all who are truly christians. Nor must we forget the relative proportions of intellect and passion, which form the basis of human character in its endless varieties. Some, to use a common mode of expression, *are all intellect*, others *are all sensibility*. These may be regarded as the two extremes, between which there are intermediate diversities innumerable. Intellect and feeling are found to be combined in every conceivable proportion, and when we bear in mind the modifying power, which each exerts over the other in religion, as well as in other subjects which engage the attention, we shall be prepared for forming a more correct judgment on the question of religious excitement. The same view will teach us to pause before we pronounce a harsh sentence, respecting even the apparent extravagance of those who are engaged in promoting the noble cause of revivals in religion.

I should wish to devote another short paper to this subject, in which I propose chiefly to trace the distinction between *true* and *false* excitement.

WICLIF.

STATE OF TURKEY.

CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

CERTAINLY, Turkey never presented such an interesting sight to the christian spectator—never was in such a sad condition—never in such a critical situation—never gave so much ground of hope, that the crescent is verging toward a total and perpetual eclipse, and that the *Sun of righteousness* will again dart his heavenly light over its paradisaical regions, as at the case at present. We see one part after another cut off from the Sultan's dominions; imbecility to ward off the attacks of the enemy, both foreign and domestic; unexampled straits in respect to finances; the rapid introduction of European fashions, arts, and learning, among the people; freedom granted to the christians therein, and even to Missionaries—for instance, at Athens, Constantinople, Smyrna, Syria and Egypt; the Pope's yoke, which has hitherto aided to keep up tyranny and superstition in the Empire as much as shaken off, or rather broken; the haughty Mahomedans beginning in several places to entertain religious intercourse with the formerly despised christians, and the Mahomedan children attending the schools of christian missionaries. Such things, indeed, impose upon us the obligation, to watch for and to be prepared to improve providential opportunities for imparting the gospel of Christ to the Mahomedans. The word of the Lord has been sent to them; *it will not return void, but accomplish the ends for which it was sent*—the ends of truth, justice, and mercy.

Even if we had not seen success, it were our sacred duty, as christians, who possess the sure promises of God, to continue our labours, and to besiege the strong holds of Satan, until a larger entrance be made; but now, when Jericho's walls are tumbling down by the shocks of the Almighty, when the captives themselves come forth and open the gates, and the Lord is graciously pleased to crown the endeavours of his people with success, how imperiously does this bespeak it our duty to press forward—to take possession of the camp—to set the prisoners free—to heal the wounded—and *to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*

MORE FREQUENT ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

(From the United Secession Magazine.)

THE propriety of a more frequent administration of the Lord's Supper has for some time past been a subject of serious consideration with the Secession Congregation of Broughton Place, Edinburgh. A good many months ago, it was moved by the oldest member of Session, and unanimously agreed, that a more frequent administration of that ordinance was desirable. Soon after, the Minister preached a short course of sermons on the nature, design, and obligation of the Lord's Supper, and published, at the request of the Session, and many of the congregation, the substance of these, under the title of "Hint on the Permanent Obligation and Frequent Observance of the Lord's Supper." In the course of a month or two, a petition subscribed by above 700 members, was presented to the Session, requesting a more frequent administration of the Lord's Supper. The Session were of opinion, that the petition was a most reasonable one; and, after deliberation, agreed, that the congregation should be afforded more frequent opportunities of commemorating the death of Christ; and that, in the mean time, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper should be administered once every two months; and that such changes should be introduced in the mode of conducting the service, as, without diminishing the solemnity of the observance, might remove some of the obstacles in the way of a more frequent administration. The new order was introduced on the first Sabbath of January; public worship commenced at half past ten o'clock. The whole of the lower part of the church was occupied as a communion table; and the intending communicants took their seats as they entered, delivering their tokens to the elders at the inner doors. After a discourse suited to the occasion, the Lord's Supper was administered, exactly as prescribed in "The Directory for Public Worship," with the single exception, that instead of one prayer before the distribution of the elements there were two prayers, one before distributing the bread, and another before distributing the wine. The service was conducted without bustle or confusion, and all who witnessed it seemed impressed with the sublime simplicity of the divine institution, and the quiet solemnity with which it was observed. Without any thing even approaching to hurry, the service was over a few minutes after one o'clock. The congregation me

the afternoon, for the ordinary offices of public worship; and the whole services of the day were performed by the same minister. Two important points have been thus settled—the practicability of even a large congregation observing the Lord's Supper at once, and of a minister, without excessive fatigue, performing all the services connected with the observance of that ordinance.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE MISSIONARY, SWARTZ.

THE native country of Swartz was Germany; the date of his birth 1726.

One of his mother's last acts on her death bed, while he was very young, was dedicating him to the service of God.

In early life he was offered a lucrative situation in the church, but his heart was set on the missionary cause—and in 1750, he embarked from London for Tranquehar, in the East Indies.

In India, Swartz laboured with unwearied perseverance, and astonishing versatility of powers, as well as great talent; but for a long time with apparently so little success, that he used to say—"Perhaps the fruit will appear when I am laid at rest." With his own eyes, however, he saw in due time an abundant harvest.

After labouring for about fifteen years, he was able to say, that several villages were inhabited by christians. The pagoda was useless; the voice of Brahmin was hushed; there were no more impure dances, or cruel sacrifices; the knowledge of Christ had entered every dwelling, and was the joy of every heart. Converts afterwards increased in number rapidly, and continued throughout life to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. The great desire of his heart was to raise to God enduring churches in India, and his desire was accomplished. Before the close of his life, the church which he had established was cherished by the rulers of the land, and revered by the people. Though small in comparison with the mighty population involved in midnight darkness, yet gathered as it had been by Swartz amid many sufferings, and after long travail of soul, it was to him like the poor man's little ewe lamb, in Nathan's parable—"It lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter."

Though early assailed with many calumnies, he lived them down; and among the people whose dearest prejudices and ancient superstitions he so fearlessly assailed, he had no enemies. His life was spent among strangers, and the hand of no relative committed his body to the grave, yet his memorial lived in the hearts of grateful multitudes. In the hall of the Rajah, at Tanjore, stands a monument of Swartz. "There," said the Prince to a British officer, pointing to it, "is the image of my father."

THE AMERICAN CHURCHES—NO. II.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

DURING the severities that were practised by the Government of Charles II. against non-conformists, many English Presbyterians, together with vast multitudes of other denominations—Independents, Baptists, Quakers—sought an asylum from persecution in America. Numbers of the Scottish Presbyterians, during the reign of the two persecuting brothers, Charles II. and James II., were forcibly banished, for conscience sake, to the American plantations. The first voluntary emigration of Presbyterians to America, for the sake of bettering their worldly circumstances, seems to have taken place from England, Ireland, and Scotland, about the year 1700. They settled in what is now a part of New Jersey and Delaware. The first Presbyterian Church formed in the United States, was in Philadelphia. The first Presbyterian Church in New York was formed in 1716. The first Presbytery, about 1706. The first Synod, that of Philadelphia, in 1716. The General Assembly, in 1788.

The General Assembly, as stated by the *New-York Observer*, had under its care in May last, 21 Synods, 110 Presbyteries, and 2,380 churches. 785 churches have pastors; 787 have stated supply; 648 are entirely vacant. The 785 churches have stated pastors only to the amount of 669, making a deficiency of 116 pastors. The 787 churches have stated supplies only to the amount of 476, making a deficiency of 311. Add to these, 648 churches which are vacant, and it appears that 1075 ministers are needed to supply the demands of the Presbyterian church in America.

There are 325 Presbyterian ministers without any particu-

charge ; some old and infirm ; some engaged as Evangelists, editors of religious papers, and teachers of Academies.

There are 260 other Presbyterian ministers engaged, some pastors in congregational churches ; some as Professors in colleges and theological seminaries ; and others as agents and secretaries of benevolent societies, and as missionaries. The total number of ministers is about 1730.

During the past year, 128 churches have been organized ; 1 ordained ministers have died ; 146 licentiates have been ordained ; and 205 candidates have been licensed to preach.

It is calculated that during the last year, upwards of 100,000 immigrants had arrived in America.

Revivals were numerous last year ; and great numbers of all ranks and occupations,—senators, merchants, and mechanics,—publicly avowed their religious impressions, by uniting themselves to the communion of the church. In the “ narrative of the state of religion, published by the authority of the General Assembly,” we are informed that sixty-eight of their Presbyteries, and 700 congregations have experienced a revival last year.

That extravagance is, in a number of instances, mixed up with revivals, and that injury is thereby done to religion is admitted and lamented by the most judicious American Divines—men who have themselves been active in forwarding that work ; but to the reality and the great number of revivals testimony has been borne not only by many eminent individuals, but repeatedly by the General Assembly itself. It is a common practice to hold what are called protracted meetings, with the view of enjoying a revival. A number of ministers are invited to attend in a particular place. Prayers are offered up for the influences of the Holy Spirit, for the conversion of the impenitent, and for a revival of the work of grace in that particular church, and in all the churches. The preaching is plain and pointed, addressed much to the conscience, urging on the sinner the danger of delay, and exhibiting and pressing the salvation of Christ as a present salvation. These meetings are continued for two, three, or four days, and sometimes for a week, in one church. The services of one day, in large towns, are usually a prayer meeting at half-past six in the morning, another at half-past nine, a sermon at half-past ten, prayer meeting at two, sermon at three ; prayer meeting at six in the evening, and sermon again at seven. On the last day or two of the meetings, what are called inquiry meetings are held after sermon, and those who

have been awakened, and are inquiring the way of salvation, are invited to attend. These meetings are, in general, well attended; they are striking and solemn; and eye-witnesses have declared it to be deeply interesting to behold a multitude of human beings assembled to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and an increase of subjects to the kingdom of the Redeemer. In this country, we are ready to conceive that such meetings must partake largely of extravagance; and, though a number of them are stated to be liable to this charge, chiefly on account of the extravagance of those who preside, yet revival meetings are common in churches where ministers preside who are sober, pious, talented, good men, strictly Calvinistic or evangelical in their views, and who are by no means inclined to wildness or enthusiasm, but who, on the contrary, labour to guard themselves and the people from all false impressions in religious feeling. "So overpowering," says the Assembly, "have been the manifestations of the Divine presence in some places, that hardly a single adult in a whole community remained unaffected. Whatever difference of opinion there may have been as to the utility of such convocations (protracted meetings), the question now seems decided, that the Lord has signally owned and abundantly blessed them. From all portions of the Church we hear the language of praise for the great things God has done by means of protracted meetings, and of the glorious displays which have rendered them eminently seasons of mercy."

The Presbyterian Church in America is not without sharp disputes, in matters of theology. In the general Assembly there are two great parties, the old school and the new school. The old school are Calvinists, and the new school men are called Hopkinsians, and sometimes "Newhaven men," inasmuch as the sentiments maintained by this party are taught in New Haven College, Connecticut. A keen controversy between these parties has, for some years past, been agitating the Presbyterian Church; and in the General Assembly they are pretty nearly balanced. The General Assembly meets annually in Philadelphia on the third Thursday in May. It is composed of representatives chosen by the different Presbyteries, and consists of about 300 members.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States concurs with the General Assembly of the Established Church in Scotland in receiving the Westminster Confession of Faith, and in requiring subscription to it by all ministers at their ordination. There is, however, no established

Church in the United States; and the views of the American General Assembly on this, and other kindred subjects, I consider myself bound by fidelity to historical truth, to subjoin from authentic documents in their own words. In a letter to the Congregational Board, London, in 1829, the Assembly state it to be their opinion "That the question is thoroughly settled by the experience of that country, that the Church of Christ flourishes here without any connexion with the state, than it could do if were made a part of the civil polity."

In 1830, the assembly thus addressed the pastors of the Established Churches of the Canton of Berne and Vaud, in Switzerland:—"Our experience proves that entire liberty of conscience is not only compatible with the existence and safety of religion, but that true christianity operates with the greatest energy, and prevails in the greatest purity where the church rests, under the grace of its Lord and Saviour, on nothing to sustain and advance its interests, but the power of truth and goodness, and the impartial exercise of its own spiritual discipline."

In 1830, the Presbyteries of Madison and Lancaster, petitioned the General Assembly to issue a formal refutation of certain charges preferred against the Presbyterian, and other denominations, of an attempt to unite church and state. The following is the Report which was adopted by the Assembly:—

"In the opinion of your committee, no public act is necessary on the part of this assembly to refute a charge wholly unsupported, by testimony and facts; nor any exposition of their principles in relation to civil magistracy and the claims of the church demanded, other than that contained in our ecclesiastical standards, and published to the world.

"For the better information, however, of any who may be in danger of imposition from unfounded statements, the Assembly would refer to the following exhibition of their principles as contained in the acknowledged constitution of their church.

EXTRACTS.

"God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him over the people, for his own glory and the public good, and to this end hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defence and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evil-doers.

"It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of magistracy, when called thereunto; in the managing whereof, as they ought especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth, so, for that end, they may lawfully draw, under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasions.

“ Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the word and sacraments : or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; or, in the least interfere in matters of faith. Yet, as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians, above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever, shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions, without violence or danger. And, as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exercise thereof among the voluntary members of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief. It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretence of religion or infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury, to any other person whatsoever, and to take order that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance.

“ It is the duty of the people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority for conscience sake. Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to him ; from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted ; much less hath the pope any power or jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people ; and, least of all, to deprive them of their dominions or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretence whatsoever.

“ Synods and councils are to handle or conclude nothing but that which is ecclesiastical ; and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition, in cases extraordinary, or by way of advice for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate.

“ That God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship. Therefore they consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable. They do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others.”

“ Such are the constitutional principles of the Presbyterian church to in these United States. They were our fathers' principles before, and during the revolution, which issued in the consummation of our liberty and independence, and under the influence of which, they prayed, and fought and bled, beside the father of our country. They have been the principles of their descendants ever since. They are our principles still, adopted from conviction, to whose support we have pledged ourselves under the most solemn sanctions, and by the preservation of which, we believe that the common interests of evangelical religion, and civil liberty will be most effectually sustained.

“ In closing this statement, the Assembly would affectionately, and earnestly exhort the members of their communion, that in the fulfil-

that of their civil and religious duties, they watch against all unhal-
 lowed feelings; and that they suffer reproach meekly, not rendering
 tongue for railing, nor evil for evil, but by patient continuance in well
 doing, commend themselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of
 God." BEDE.

SCRIPTURE CRITICISM.

Answer to the Infidel Objection respecting the alleged dishonesty of the Israelites, in carrying off from the Egyptians, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment.—Exod. iii. 22, xi. 2, and xii. 35.

THE displays of God's power in rescuing his people from Egyptian bondage, have ever proved to the infidel a fruitful source of cavil. Infidels are sceptical respecting the plagues which God inflicted on the Egyptians, as the punishment of their grievous tyranny and oppression. They do not believe in miraculous agency. It were easy to expose the vague and inconclusive reasonings which they are compelled to put forward, in vainly attempting to justify their unbelief of this portion of the divine record; but we are more anxious at once to storm what they conceive to be their strong hold, and to spoil them of the armour in which they have often trusted.

It is stated in our translation of the scriptures, that the command issued from Jehovah, and was addressed to the Israelites, that "Every man should *borrow* of his neighbour, and every woman of her neighbour, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment." This command we find,—Exod. xii. 35, was obeyed to the very letter. The Israelites are there represented as having *borrowed* these precious things on the night of their deliverance from the house of bondage. Now, it will be admitted on all hands, that the very idea of *borrowing*, implies on the part of the borrower, the full intention of *returning* to the lawful owner the articles thus received. The lender is given to understand that the property which he hands over to another in this capacity, is still his own, and that he shall come again into actual possession of it. There is, in fact, a moral obligation in the case, and he who *borrow*s, entertaining the secret purpose, never to return the property borrowed, has sacrificed his character for truth and honesty;—he is a fraudulent man. Such, it has been strenuously maintained, was the dishonourable and wicked course pursued by the Israelites towards Pharaoh and his people; and as the precept enjoining the

fraud, is asserted to have proceeded from God, either the divine character comes in for a portion of the charge, or an obstacle plainly insurmountable lies against the plenary inspiration of the scriptures. Did the Israelites act dishonestly, it is asked, even towards their oppressors? Then who will pretend to justify their conduct? This we consider to be a fair statement of the objection pressed by infidelity. That it can be triumphantly refuted, we hope to be able to convince our readers; but we shall first state our reasons for not adopting some of the refutations which great and good men have considered satisfactory.

I. It has been alleged, and with great truth, that Egypt was deeply indebted to the Israelites; in the first instance, in consequence of the eminent services rendered by Joseph, and afterwards, for the ill requited toil of the thousands, whom Pharaoh made to serve with rigour. By the sojourning of the descendants of Abraham, Egypt was benefited to an almost incalculable amount. The lives of her sons and daughters were preserved, and the kingdom advanced to a most flourishing condition. The Israelites were slaves—their liberties destroyed—their bodies and souls oppressed by a grinding bondage. They laboured faithfully in the land of Ham, and they laboured unremunerated. When therefore God was breaking the chains of their slavery, and restoring them to the condition of *freemen*, was it not right and just that they should wring from the hand of oppression, the dear earnings of the sweat of their brow? Their labours demanded remuneration; and they were not overpaid by “the jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment” of which they despoiled their enemies. This view has often been considered fair and satisfactory; we confess, however, that to our minds it affords no solution whatever of the difficulty. Though the Egyptians may have owed millions to the children of Israel, that circumstance would not justify the latter in borrowing one mite, with the fraudulent intention of not returning it. There is an understood engagement on the part of the *borrower*, which cannot be violated without contracting guilt. By such a mode of reasoning, then, we are decidedly of opinion, that a refutation of the objection is not in any degree approximated.

II. It has been alleged, and is also unquestionably true, that God has an inalienable right, as well to the property, as to the lives of his creatures; and it is farther alleged that his command, in the instance before us, is a sufficient vindication of the conduct of his people. They borrowed of the Egyptians

els and raiment, but it was by the express injunction of him to whom all things appertain, and with whose sovereign arrangements no power in heaven or earth dares to interfere. This statement must carry with it great weight wherever it is applicable, and we would not for a moment, be understood to question its abstract accuracy. Men and property are alike at God's disposal, and he is justified in transferring possessions to whomsoever he will. But from the revelation given of his character, can we believe it to be at all probable, that in transferring property, he would sanction a principle which involves fraud and dishonesty? Would he command his people to borrow, thus leading the Egyptians to expect repayment, whilst the secret intention was directly opposed to the outward profession? Surely that be far from God! "Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do *right*?" Having considered these satisfactory modes of solving the difficulty, we proceed to observe:—

III. That the literal signification of the Hebrew word translated *borrow*, is simply *ask*; and that therefore primarily involves no idea of repayment. There is no innovation in such a statement. This view is supported by the highest authorities. Those who are at all acquainted with Hebrew literature will not question its accuracy; and those whose pursuits have not led them to cultivate that study, will not lightly reject an opinion supported by a Pool, a Henry, a Brown and Scott. The instances in which our translators have adopted this rendering, are numerous. "*Ask* of me and I will give thee the Father for thine inheritance"—Psal. ii. 8. "*Ask* counsel, we say thee of God."—Judg. xviii. 5. "The young children *ask* bread, and no man breaketh it unto them"—Lam. iv. 4. It is unnecessary to multiply quotations. Not only is the original word occurring in these passages, the same which is rendered *borrow*, but the transaction between the Israelites and the Egyptians; but until the year 1549, the term *borrow* was not employed in the English versions; "the Geneva bible, Barker's, and some others, having *aske*." No exception, therefore, can be taken against it as an unfair representation of the Original; and from the following considerations we shall discover more fully the propriety, and indeed the necessity of its adoption.

I. Whilst the vials of divine wrath were pouring on Egypt, an express intimation that the Israelites should be completely rescued from the land of their task-masters, was made from heaven. When Moses first stood before Pharaoh, he demanded in the name of the God of the Hebrews, that Pharaoh

would allow them to go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to Jehovah. With this demand the king refused compliance. He would not consent to even a temporary cessation of the grievous toils which he had imposed on his bondmen. The demand was repeated, and every fresh judgment stamped it with terrible emphasis. It became apparent to all—even Pharaoh could not conceal it from his own mind that the children of Israel were to be numbered among the free. God had engaged to bring their armies *out of* the land of Egypt; before the death of the first-born, the precise time was appointed for this signal deliverance; and the event represented as so certain that it was spoken of in the past time “Ye shall observe the feast of unleavened bread,” said Jehovah “for in this self-same day *I brought* your armies out of the land of Egypt.” The Israelites therefore knew that they were departing not to return—their departure was final, and hence on the supposition that they were “right-hearted men,” the idea of *asking* or demanding, corresponds with their circumstances, that of *borrowing* does not. If they led the Egyptians to expect repayment, their conduct was deceitful. If they simply, according to the command of God, asked or demanded a certain remuneration for their labours, now that the time of servitude had expired, no tongue but a lying one can charge them with the slightest approach to dishonesty.

2. It would appear from the narrative that the Egyptians themselves, knew that Israel was taking a last leave of their land, and therefore it is natural to conclude that they expected no repayment. In Egypt there were no objections to the services of Israel, but there were objections to the plagues of Israel's God. However Pharaoh might desire to retain those whom he had basely and ungratefully made slaves—however he might set at nought the laws of justice and generosity, and attempt to trample on the decree of heaven, neither he nor his people could endure the scourges of divine wrath. Proud and rebellious though they were, God compelled them to acknowledge his hand, to tremble under his rod, and gladly to allow the departure of his people. Moses had acquired incalculable influence, being alike feared and honoured throughout all the land. And then the last heavy stroke: in every home the funeral pall—every house a house of mourning, and every death the death of a first-born! Oh, it was not a time for lending but it was a time for giving the Israelites whatsoever they desired; and of hurrying them away as the cause of misery and death, and mourning! for, said the Egyptians, “We b

dead men." With this view, corresponds in a remarkable degree, the literal meaning of the term *lend*, in the original. It signifies to *cause to ask*: showing that the Egyptians manifested such a disposition as encouraged Israel to demand largely, willing to part with their most valuable property, in order to get for ever of a people whose presence was terror and death. This is the true secret of their cheerfully giving up, without hope of return, their jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment, a nation on which they had long trampled with impunity. These remarks, we hope, will assist in banishing doubt from the mind of the christian, and in teaching the infidel that objections to divine revelation are often founded in ignorance. D.

BURIAL AT SEA.

A funeral is a melancholy and impressive service any where, particularly so at sea, and aboard a man-of-war. There is nothing more deeply thrilling in the call of the boatswain, "All hands to bury the dead, ahoy!" as it passes through the ship, echoed from deck to deck by his mates, than even in the monitory sounds of the bell of death on shore; and as for the first time, in obedience to it, I ascended the companion ladder, and passed through the opening crowd to the side of the ship, where, in the sad preparations of the grave, lay the remains of one, who at that hour the day previous, had little thought of being then in eternity, I could scarcely command my voice in giving utterance to the sublime declaration of the burial service—"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord." The pause, too, preceding the words—"We commit thy body to the deep;" and then the plunge and plash of the lifeless body, as it is launched into its watery tomb, speak in a voice more deeply touching, than that sent back by the clod from the valley, from the narrow house, when "Dust returns to dust, and ashes to ashes!" in the seemingly more natural cemetery within the church-yard limits."—*Stewart's Visit to the South Seas.*

VISITATION OF THE SICK.

THE presence of the minister of the gospel is required in the chamber of sickness. His visit often affords him the last

opportunity of pressing on the conscience of a perishing sinner, salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. He may feel as if going on a forlorn hope, but let him not despair, remembering, that God is able to save to the very uttermost, and to pluck men as brands from the burning. There is still some encouragement. God has in many instances countenanced the ministrations of his servants, and by them, imparted spiritual light and life, when the darkness of death was about to close upon the soul for ever. We would not, therefore, hold away from the sinner's death-bed, however appalling the spectacle. We would not despair of the mercy of God in Christ Jesus: so long as the soul has not fled, and the avenues which lead to it remain unsealed, we would labour to win the soul to Christ.

Far be it from us to encourage habits of procrastination. To all men, we say in the language of scripture, "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."—"Now is the accepted time, NOW is the day of salvation." But if the warnings and invitations of the gospel, in any case have been neglected, and the concerns of eternity madly reserved for a death-bed, we would still endeavour to lead the mind to the Saviour of sinners, assured that "While there is life, there is hope." Even at such a crisis, may we not say—Peradventure God will give the sinner repentance to the acknowledging of the truth? The minister may complain of the want of success on former occasions—he may aver that death-bed conversions are improbable; but, if during a lifetime, he should be the honoured instrument of rescuing one soul from the horrors of eternal death, will not his time have been well spent, and his talents usefully employed? His labours, and prayers, and watchings, with genial influence shall visit his own soul, "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion," and there God will command the blessing, even life for ever more.—Psalm cxxxiii. 3.

But suppose the sinner's heart to remain hard as before, and his dying moments to exhibit only the wildness of despair—what then? Doubtless, if the minister of the gospel consulted with flesh and blood, he would contrive to be absent from this awful scene. But by absence he would lose the opportunity of dropping a word in season to others, and he would lose a solemn lesson addressed to his own soul. O how deeply must we feel the necessity of being "instant in season and out of season," as we pass mournfully from the chamber where despair has seized his victim, or stand over the grave which affords no hope of a happy resurrection! Surely the minister will

try the effect with him to the pulpit; and he will become more earnest in beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God, and his appeals to the conscience will be more warm, and poignant, and searching. The remembrance will urge him to give heed to the doctrines, to continue in them; that by so doing, he may both save himself and them that hear him.

The duty of visiting the sick has its "lights" as well as its shadows.' The heart of the minister is pressed down with turning and sadness, as he takes his leave of one sufferer; he is elevated and gladdened by means of his interview with another. He meets in the hour of affliction, the man who has long walked in the good ways of the Lord, and he sees in him a practical demonstration of the power of religion. For ourselves, we count it an inestimable privilege to have access to the true christian under affliction—to witness his faith and resignation, and to be helpers of his joy. His life, he feels, is in the hands of his God; and whatever may be the ties which bind him to the world, he is enabled to say in the fullness of his heart, "Thy will be done." The great desire of his soul is, that whether living or dying he may be the Lord's. He is not regardless of the friends whom God hath given him, but he esteems far above them all, that friend who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." To him, the deliverance of sinners is the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. His experience of divine goodness, amid the variety of scene and change through which he has passed, leads him to take a still faster hold of the Redeemer, who can keep him from falling, and present him faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Does he look to the grave—it is dark and cheerless; yet even here his soul can rejoice, for Jesus hath said "I am the resurrection and the life:" and an inspired Apostle hath said "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Is he the father of a family, and must he leave them, perhaps ill provided for, in the midst of a cold unfeeling world; faith immediately seizes on the promise—"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me." Jer. xlix. 11.

In the promises of the gospel he knows to be exceeding great and precious; they are food and health to his spirit; and by the consolation which they afford, God maketh him to lie down in green pastures, he leadeth him by the still waters. In holy triumph, he can almost venture upon the language of Isaiah, "I know that my Redeemer liveth and that he shall stand in the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin,

worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me."—Job xix. 25–27.

Such experience, particularly when it has been preceded by a life of holiness, is valuable to the minister of the gospel and to the church at large. A visit to such an individual, brings us, as it were, into contact with paradise. Here is a powerful living testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus—Here the promises are put to the test, and found to be the sterling ore of heaven. Here is faith's victory over the world. Triumphant hour! Another addition is made to the number of those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. May not the minister of the gospel whose office affords him the benefit of experience like this, thank God and take courage? All are not unbelievers—all do not reject the counsel of God against themselves—all are not in a state of impenitence. He may complain that his ministrations have been productive of little fruit; but here is fruit that will redound to the glory of God for ever more. The minister of Christ feels it to be so; and with fresh alacrity he goes onward, publishing the glad tidings of peace and salvation. He becomes more diligent in holding forth the word of life; that he may rejoice in the day of Christ, that he has not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.—Philip. ii. 16. He prizes more than ever the wisdom which may be learned in the chamber of death; and incited to increasing assiduity in his Master's work, he is ready to say to his people as Paul said to the church at Philippi—"If I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all."

D.

SEED TIME.

How interesting is the present season. The dreary desolation of winter is fast disappearing. The Earth is brightening as she holds her bosom daily nearer the returning Sun. The trees put forth their tender buds, and the grassy hills are freshening with deepening tints of livelier green. Birds of various note, each with its song of joy, in concert greet the coming reviving nature. Soon shall those cold east winds have sun to rest, and warmth and sunshine, and singing birds and blooming flowers, fields covered with waving corn, pastures clothed

h flocks, trees green with all their luxury of leaves, and the
de-spread landscape, bright with the light of sunny skies,
all once again display the glories of triumphant spring.

This is the season of preparation. The plough has done
work. Man goeth forth to his labour. The farmer walks
with measured tread, and casts his seed "into the faith-
ful bosom of the ground." Carefully the harrow after comes and
turns in the precious grain.

This is the season of expectation. The farmer sows in hope.
His seed he casts into the ground, not to be lost there, not to
perish there, but that it may spring up and ripen, and bring
forth much fruit. For this he toils—for this he manures, he
ploughs, he sows—for this he waits the springing, shooting,
ripening of the crop. Calculating on the certainty of harvest,
and reckoning on receiving his own again with harvest in-
crease, he spares not cost nor toil. Though drowning rains
should fall, and shaking winds should blow, his seed he lends
to the earth, and commits it to the God of seasons.

When the farmer tills the ground, and sows his seed, and
rejoices well his fields, is that all? Does his heart heave no
anxious wish for warming suns, and fertilizing dews and soft-
ening showers? Drop down, ye Skies, your fatness from
above, and let the Earth beneath bring forth her abundance!
What is there no more than this? There is a God, and under
the blessing of his God the christian husbandman fails not to
rejoice in his season's care and harvest hope. God of the world,
thou inwardly exclaim'st, thou renewest the face of the earth: I
have tilled—I have sown: Bless thou the springing thereof:
Give thou the increase!

Why should it be thought fanatical or strange that the
christian husbandman should seek the blessing of his God to
prosper the labour of his hands, and to accomplish his harvest
hope? Does not all good come down from him? Is not
his ceaseless, ever-working providence seen in the revolution of
the seasons, and in the productiveness of the earth? Is not
the seedtime a season of promise on God's part, as it is of hope
to ours? Is it not written in the sacred page, that when the
earth rose fair and green again from out the waters of the flood,
the Lord said in his heart, While the earth remaineth, sum-
mer and winter, seedtime and harvest, day and night, shall not
cease? We talk of vegetation, of the germinating property of
seed, of the productiveness of soil, of the fertilizing influences
of rain and sun: but how do all these concurring agencies
cause the growth of grain? By the laws of nature, some re-

ply. And are we too, to take our stand among the blind idolaters of nature? We bow not to this idolatry a patient knee. Who is nature? Where does she hold her court—where is her temple—where the place of her rest? What mysterious power is this that issues forth her laws, fills the universe with living energy, and clothes the dreary winter-wasted landscape with vegetation and verdure? Who is nature?

“Nature is but a name for an effect
Whose cause is God.”

What are the laws of nature? God carries forward the course of things, according to his own established arrangements; by them he works; and these are the laws of nature.

“But how should matter occupy a charge,
Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
So vast in its demands, unless impelled
To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
And under pressure of some conscious cause?
The Lord of all, himself through all diffused,
Sustains, and is the life of all that lives.”

The seed germinates, but who gives it its germminating power? When we see the grain and grass waving green along the fields, we speak of vegetation; but from whom comes forth the vegetative power? We speak of warmth, and dews, and showers; but who is it that communicates to fertilizing dews and softening showers, and to the world-reviving sun, their productive agency? God: it is God that works. Second causes have their place—they are his ordinances—by them he works—but second causes are not God. From God they derive their being and their power. His providence pervades the universe—works every where and ever more—ceases not—tires not—sleeps not—

“Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.”

Providence is the spring and life of the world; giving to the sun his light, to the earth productiveness, to the seed vegetation, and to the seasons fruitfulness.

Do we make too much of Providence? Open the scriptures. Do they not teach us to view the supreme agency of God in all the varied year? *He* maketh *his* sun to rise: *He* sendeth rain: *He* giveth fruitful seasons: *He* fills men's hearts with food and gladness: *He* openeth his hand, and giveth meat to every living creature. “*He* causeth the grass to grow

the cattle, and herbs for man, that he may bring forth food of the earth." What is the worship which the scriptures teach us to give to God? Do they not put words of praise into our mouths for his goodness through the revolving seasons? "Thou visitest the earth and waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it fruitful with showers; thou blessest the springing thereof. Thou crownest the year with thy goodness, and thy paths drop fatness." "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches."

Behold Providence, not only imparting energy to second causes, but employing and prospering the agency of man. The action of providence supersedes not human exertion. This, on the contrary, God ordains, and makes conducive to our welfare. He gives us our daily bread, but he gives it through our own exertions. By an unchanging law, he has connected activity with our happiness: and what is obtained by means of industry and skill, we prize more highly and enjoy with double lish. Sweeter far is the bread of industry, than the bread of idleness or dependence. Sin, it is true, has mingled evil with all earthly good; but the blessing of God expels the curse; and has he not promised his blessing? "Thou shalt eat of the labour of thine hands; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee." When thou puttest forth thine industry and thy skill—when thou sowest in Spring, and reapest

Autumn—when thy fields yield their treasures and thy barns are filled with plenty—when thou hast abundance for the winter, and goods laid up for many years,—say not in thine heart, Mine own wisdom and mine own might have gotten me these things. Forget not God. To the goodness of his ever-working providence, be all ascribed. The wisdom and the skill in man, are from God, as well as germination in the seed, vegetation in the earth, and favouring seasons crowning all. Is this ascribing too much to God? Open the scriptures. Do they not ascribe to him man's skill, as well as the earth's productiveness? Read what is said by the Prophet, Is. xxviii. 23--29, "Give ye ear and hear my voice; hearken and hear my speech. Doth the plowman plough all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley, and the rye in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." The same principle may be extended to all the arts and dis-

coveries that minister to human good. Of medicine, of navigation, of printing, of machinery, of government, it may be said, as of agricultural skill, "This also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

Youth is the seedtime of life. To future years it bears the same relation that seedtime does to harvest; it is the season of ardent hope—of preparation—of busy activity. Of what importance is it that this preparation should be for good, and that this activity should be rightly directed! What would you think of the farmer who slept when he should sow: who should expect a crop without cultivation, or who should sow his ground with the seeds of weeds and poisons? Greater far is the folly of wasting the golden hours of youth, in vanity or vice. Greater far is the misery and mischief of abandoning your minds to ignorance, and leaving them to crop themselves with sinful passions. Cultivate your understandings—sow them with the seeds of useful knowledge and of upright principles—sow them with the fear of God—benevolence to man—love to Christ—respect for religion—with truth—with honesty—with temperance—with all that is virtuous and praiseworthy; Sow them with the imperishable seed of God's holy Word. So shall thy summer of manhood be bright; thine autumn of age fruitful and happy; and when thou shalt have been gathered to thy fathers, like a shock of corn ripe in its season, glorious and joyful shall be thine heavenly harvest home.

Life is the seedtime of eternity. What you sow now, you must reap hereafter. Know ye not that the crop you reap is in kind the same as the seed committed to the ground? Do you sow wheat? It is wheat you reap; but if you sow weeds and poisons, can you expect a harvest of any thing but weeds and poisons in return? Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? If you sow nothing now but thorns and thistles, it is madness to expect your fields to wave with golden grain in autumn; and is it not madness to sow sin now, when you know that you must reap misery throughout eternity?

We must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or evil: and he will render to every man according to his works. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

Now is thy seedtime, O christian. Then sow now: sow plentifully; sow diligently; as thou hopest to reap life everlasting. What shall I sow, do you ask? Sow the seed of God's imperishable word upon thine own heart and the hearts of thy children and those who are around thee! What shall I sow, do you say? Sow the seed of bounty to the poor; for he that hath pity on the poor lendeth to the Lord, and it shall be recompensed to him again. What shall I sow? Sow the seed of the Spirit, and the good works of the christian. "In the morning, sow thy seed, and in the evening, withhold not thine hand;" "and let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

The Christian has his harvest; and harvest indemnifies for preparatory cost and toil. He reaps, even in this life: a sense of the divine favour, a tranquil temper, a peaceful conscience, a hope full of immortality, the love and confidence of friends of Jesus,—are not these blessings infinitely to be preferred to the guilty gains and pleasures of the wicked? At the full harvest is reserved for heaven. There is fulness of joy. There all toil and tears are at an end. There shall be seen that the Lord is not a hard master, but that he shall recompense his servants with a generosity and grace worthy of himself. In proportion to the seed is the harvest; and he that soweth plentifully shall reap also plentifully.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall, doubtless, come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

CEPHAS.

NOTICE OF SERMONS,

preached on occasion of the Death of the Rev. JOHN DICK, D.D., Minister of the Associate Congregation, Greyfriars' Church, Glasgow, and one of the Professors of Theology to the United Secession Church; by the Rev. Dr. PEDDIE, of Edinburgh, the Rev. Dr. MITCHELL, of Glasgow, and the Rev. ANDREW MARSHALL, of Kirkcubright.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CHRISTIAN FREEMAN.

THE most of your readers have probably heard of the melancholy event which occasioned the delivery of these discourses—

the death of the Rev. Doctor Dick, after a short illness, on Friday, the 24th of January last. I am persuaded, however, that they will be gratified by something more than a common notice of it in an obituary ; as Dr. Dick is extensively known by his writings, and while he was a distinguished ornament of the United Secession Church in Scotland, he was also one of those whom the religious public affectionately regard as common property. His removal, accordingly, is universally lamented as a loss to christian scholarship, to evangelical religion, and to enlightened and elevated piety.—Having read with deep interest the discourses preached after his death, I am induced to request that you would allow me the melancholy gratification of transcribing for your pages some passages referring to his history and character, as I shall thus indulge my own feelings of regret for the loss of one whose friendship I have always esteemed the greatest honour, and at the same time acquaint your readers with the excellencies of his character, as delineated by those who had the best opportunities of knowing them. No one, I am persuaded, who was intimate with him, will consider the delineations as overcharged. The sermons of Dr. Peddie and Dr. Mitchell were preached immediately after the funeral of Dr. Dick, to his congregation in Greyfriars' Church, Glasgow ; and that by Mr. Marshall was preached, at the same time, in Kirkintilloch, near Glasgow, where Dr. Dick had long been known.

The following is a sketch of his history, by his early friend, the Rev. Dr. Peddie, of Edinburgh :—

“ His history I do not purpose at present particularly to detail, only I cannot forbear mentioning what cannot be supposed to be generally known, that he gave early discoveries of those talents and of that classical taste for which he became afterwards so distinguished. At the age of twelve years, without the knowledge of his parents, at least of his father, he presented himself before the senatus of King's College, Aberdeen, as one of the candidates for a bursary, which was to be determined by open competition, and after trial it was found that, in justice, the boy must be preferred to the other candidates, who were his superiors in stature and in age. This accounts for his studies having been carried on in Old Aberdeen rather than in Marshall College, which was locally much more convenient ; and accounts too for his having finished a very regular course of study so early that he entered the Divinity Hall before he was sixteen complete, and received licence from the Associate Presbytery of Perth and Dundee at twenty-one. He had no sooner received license than his talents began to attract attention, and wherever he preached to vacant congregations, the more judicious at least among the members, became eager to have him for their minister. The newly formed congregation of Slateford, in the vicinity of Edinburgh, lost no time after hearing him preach, before they gave him an unanimous call, and he

ordained their minister at the age of twenty-two, to the high
 fication of the people, and much to his own satisfaction, as the
 l beauty of the spot delighted his imagination, while the duties
 e moderate, and the retirement of the situation offered him the
 e opportunities for study. It was soon found, however, that his
 ole would not be permitted long to enjoy, undisturbed the privi-
 e of his able ministrations. His reputation rapidly extended, and
 various attempts were made to translate him to a more public
 ere of usefulness. At last, after he had for fifteen years laboured
 Blatford diligently and happy in his work, this congregation fixed
 r eyes upon him, and prevailed on the Synod, to whose judgment
 matter was referred, to remove him to labour among them, along
 a my long since departed and much respected friend, Mr. Pirie.
 eak to those who can attest the blamelessness and the integrity of
 conversation, and with what ability and fidelity he discharged his
 ic and private ministrations. His writings and his occasional
 ours in other places spread his fame more and more widely ; in so
 ch that when the providence of God removed that great and good
 a Dr. Lawson, the Synod chose Dr. Dick for his successor as
 fessor of Divinity ; a choice which was confirmed by the United
 ociate Synod at its first meeting, which happened soon thereafter.
 ch what approbation and with what success he discharged the
 es of this highly honourable and very resopnsible office, let the
 y considerable number of our present ministers who studied under
 , let the whole body of our probationers, and those whose studies
 e in progress under his inspection, declare ; they were unanimous,
 ar as my information reaches, in their respect and attachment, and
 so in their regret, and the lamentation they make over him now
 t he is gone.

We might have hoped that the Head of the Church would have
 mitted us the use of his high talents for a few years longer. His
 titution was on the whole sound ; he had not much exceeded the
 y-eighth year of his age ; no symptom appeared of corporeal or
 ntal decline ; and in the course of nature it was more probable that
 should have performed for me this painful office which I have been
 ed to perform for him. But his work was done, and why should
 ave been detained from the enjoyment of his reward ? He had
 ached as usual on the Lord's day ; spoken at a public meeting on
 ednesday, called for petitioning the Legislature to interpose for the
 ter observation of the Sabbath ; met with his session in the even-
 to make arrangements for the approaching dispensation of the
 rd's Supper ; though complaining during the night, was up at an
 ly hour at his studies on the morning of Thursday ; and was on his
 th-bed on the evening of the same day, and entered into his rest
 he course of the Friday. The narrative is short, but solemn and
 ressive."

Dr. Mitchell—associated with him as Professor of Biblical
 erature, to the united Secession Church—thus delineates
 ne interesting features of his character :—

Your late Pastor seemed to possess, in a high degree, what may
 called *harmony and strength of character*. The elements of which
 was composed were of a high order—intellectual and moral—as well

as of rare excellence. Its features were all in unison, and all admirable. Each sustained, and shed light upon the other.

“A dignified plainness—simplicity, a noble simplicity,—seemed to constitute the most prominent trait. Never spirit was more unsophisticated. He scorned to appear, or rather he could not appear, that which he was not. What he seemed, that he was; whatever he spoke that he thought and felt. Hence, though always courteous, he could not be complimentary, in the strict sense of the term, as implying some degree, or kind, of dissimulation and flattery.

“Of what he was in the bosom of his family, I dare hardly speak: such sorrow seems almost too sacred to be intruded upon. There, his love and his kindness shone out with peculiar, though still unostentatious lustre. There, while affection pervaded all, the rule of authority was lightly felt, because it was gently exercised. There, memorials of his pious example, and of his tender and endearing regards, are engraven on many a heart, too deeply to be ever effaced.”

WILLIAM CAIRNS.

UNITED SYNOD OF UPPER CANADA.

THE following extracts from the Minutes of the United Synod of Upper Canada will be gratifying to all christians, especially to the members of her sister Synod of the Secession in Ireland.

The Presbytery of York report—

“Pure and undefiled religion has been decidedly on the advance among us, and in a way that we think characteristic of the influences of him who has said, ‘I will be as dew unto Israel.’ Numbers have been added to our churches, particularly from among the young; and the means of grace have been well attended. The temperance cause is also prospering among us, and our people are awakening more and more to the necessity of an effort being made on its behalf. A number of societies have been formed in our congregations; and it is hoped that in this, as well as in other branches of practical holiness, their light will so shine before men, that others seeing their good works, will glorify their Father who is in heaven.”

The Presbytery of Brockville report—

“In our churches the Lord has been doing great things for us, whereof we are glad. The Spirit of God has been poured out in an abundant manner on several of our churches. The number of the members of our churches has been increased, and they have walked worthy of the high vocation wherewith they are called. The temperance cause also is on the advance

among us, and many of our people are to be found enrolled among its friends and supporters."

NOTICE OF BOOKS.

Reverie, and other Poems.—By J. D. HULL, A. B.
Incumbent of Killaney.

WE have only space to announce the publication of this interesting volume. Our previous knowledge of the piety and talent of the esteemed author, led us to anticipate with pleasure the appearance of his book; we have not been disappointed. Mr. Hull is a christian poet. In the perusal of his poems, we have found the style perspicuous—the sentiment evangelical, and the spirit highly devotional. The moral tendencies of the work are excellent; we cordially recommend it, as the production of a mind, ardently desirous to glorify God and benefit man.

Hints designed to aid Christians in their efforts to convert sinners to God. By Dr T. H. Skinner, of Philadelphia, and Dr. Beecher, President of Illinois College. Glasgow, G. Gallie; Belfast, H. Rea, 17, Waring-street.

The subject to which this small but valuable work refers is one of vital importance to every christian, and especially to every christian minister in the world. The church of God is the evangelist of the world; hence the progress of the gospel in subduing souls to the obedience of Christ is always represented as an enlargement and extension of the existing church. Now, if the agency by means of which God intends to establish, in every part of our fallen world, the spiritual kingdom of his Son, be found in the church, every minister, yea, and every member of that church, is placed under obligations to attempt, in his own sphere, the saving conversion of souls unto God. This solemn duty has been, we fear, very feebly discharged in our land, just because these obligations have been imperfectly recognised. The church of God, in this country, owes an immense debt to unconverted men, and we rejoice in the opportunity of introducing a collection of most useful "hints," by which the church may not only be aroused to a sense of the importance of this neglected duty, but may be usefully instructed in attempting its future discharge.

We cordially recommend to ALL our readers this very cheap and very interesting little work. We have found it useful in

producing in our own minds a stronger desire to become the humble instruments of "converting sinners from the error of their ways," and we doubt not that our readers having carefully perused it will have reason to make a similar acknowledgment. We sincerely thank the publisher of this edition, Mr. Gallie, of Glasgow, for this, among other instances, in which he has introduced us into the society of American divines.

Original Poetry.

SCRIPTURE SONGS—NO. II.

MATT. vi. 25-33.—LUKE xii. 22-31.

CHILDREN of doubt, why anxious ask,
How you'll be clothed or how be fed?
Think ye, your Father knoweth not
Your need of raiment and of bread?

His ever bounteous care supplies
The ravens when they cry for food—
Are not his children dearer far,
Than is the raven's hungry brood?

Who can by thought, or studious skill,
Add to his height one foot's excess?
Why then should fear of future ill,
With anxious care the soul distress?

No distaff spun, no loom e'er wove,
The lily's robe of snowy white;
Yet Solomon in all his pride
Of glory never shone so bright.

If God so clothe the flowers of earth,
That bloom to-day—to-morrow die;
Think ye, O ye of little faith,
Will not his love, your wants supply?

Then seek not things of earthly care,
Nor be of dark distrustful mind,
As the vain race of worldlings are—
God knows your wants, and God is kind.

Seek ye the kingdom of his Love,
There never failing joys abound,
And as your treasure is above,
There also let your hearts be found.

Belfast, Feb. 23, 1833.